

Make 'n Take

Name of Make 'n Take: Buffalo Hide Painting: Stories through Symbols

Theme & Topic: The Lifestyles of the First Nations People Before and After the Arrival of the Newcomers – First Nations peoples and the Buffalo

Names of Teachers: Beverly Ouellette

Name of School: Lakeview/Milliken Schools, Regina Public School Division

Grades: Grade 1 (this lesson could be adapted for other grade levels)

Date: October 8, 2009

Materials:

Book: *People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived* by Maria Campbell (found in the Office of the Treaty Commissioner Treaty Resource Kit in your school)

Website: "Tracking the buffalo: stories from a buffalo hide painting" <http://americanhistory.si.edu/kids/buffalo/>
(Assessed on 15/04/10)

Brown butcher paper or tanned construction paper, paint in different colors, and water.

Procedure: Note – This will take more than one day.

1. Read sections from *People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived* by Maria Campbell on the use of the Buffalo by First Nations people. Discuss the importance of the buffalo and how different parts of the buffalo were used by Plains First Nations people.
2. Focus on the use of the hide as a canvas for telling about important events that happened. Draw a picture of a buffalo hide on chart paper. Use some simple symbols (i.e. rain, sun, girl, boy, grass, etc...) to create a story with the students
3. Show the students a shape of a buffalo hide cut out of brown paper. Explain to the students that they will receive one "buffalo hide" each. Draw the shape of the buffalo on each paper.

4. Making the buffalo hide:

- have each child soak the hide in water
- crunch it into a ball ringing out the excess water to create a crinkled look
- have them open the ball up and lay the hide down to dry
- when the paper is dry have the students rip out the shape of the buffalo hide along the outline you have drawn.

If you are going to do this with the students, you may want some parents to come in to assist you.

Or you can prepare the “buffalo hides” prior to the activity.

5. Sit with the students and talk about some possible symbols for their stories. If some students have difficulty creating their own story a class story can be created and the students can make the symbols on their hides.
6. The symbols need to be drawn with a black marker and displayed on a wall in the classroom after each child has the opportunity to share his/her story.

Note: You can have the children use sticks for “buffalo bones” to write/draw their symbols for their stories. Black paint would be needed for this or other nature colors could be used i.e. red, orange, purple, green, etc...

7. A good website can be found by writing Buffalo Hide Painting in a Google search. A site “Tracking the buffalo: stories from a buffalo hide painting” <http://americanhistory.si.edu/kids/buffalo/> (Assessed on 15/04/10) or you can find a good outline of a buffalo hide on Page 35 in *People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived* by Maria Campbell (found in the Office of the Treaty Commissioner Treaty Resource Kit in your school).